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ACTION 66-25INFO OCT-01 AOS-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
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E.O. 12065: GDS 10/15/85 (AMSTUTZ, J. BRUCE) OR-M  
TAGS: PEPR, AF, US  
SUBJ: PRESIDENT AMIN'S DESIRE FOR BETTER RELATIONS

REF: STATE 266391

1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT)

2. SUMMARY. BEFORE CHARGE-DESIGNATE ARCHER BLOOD AND I CALL ON HAFIZULLAH AMIN, I WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH YOU MY RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE TIMING OF THIS CALL. FOR ONE THING, THERE IS ANOTHER GARRISON MUTINY APPARENTLY GOING ON NOW ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF KABUL. SUBSTANTIVE-WISE, TOO, I THINK WE HAVE TO BE CAREFUL THAT WE DO NOT RAISE IN AMIN'S MIND EXPECTATIONS WE ARE NOT IN A POSITION TO FULFILL. I RECOMMEND THIS CALL BE POSTPONED. END SUMMARY.

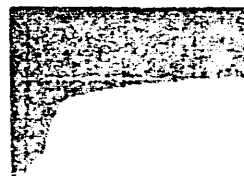
3. AS THIS IS BEING DRAFTED, ANOTHER GARRISON MUTINY HAS APPARENTLY BROKEN OUT AT A MAJOR MILITARY BASE (RISHKOR) ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF KABUL. THE OUTCOME OF THIS IS UNCLEAR. CONSEQUENTLY, I DON'T THINK TOMORROW WILL BE A PROPITIOUS TIME FOR US TO TRY TO CALL ON AMIN TO DISCUSS BETTERING RELATIONS WITH THE U.S.

4. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS. I SUSPECT THAT THE AFGHANS MAY BE  
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CONFUSED ABOUT WHERE THE BALL LIES WITH RESPECT TO IMPROVING

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OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS. IN ASSISTANT SECRETARY SAUNDERS' STATEMENT OF SEPT 26 BEFORE THE WOLFF SUBCOMMITTEE, HE SAID THAT THE INITIATIVE FOR BETTERING OUR RELATIONS LAY WITH THE DRA. ON OCT 4, WHEN I CALLED ON FOREIGN MINISTER SHAH WALI, HE SAID THAT THE INITIATIVE LAY WITH US. SUBSEQUENT TO ALL THIS, ON OCT 6 WE IN FACT TOOK A SMALL INITIATIVE TO IMPROVE OUR RELATIONS BY MY ACT OF INFORMING THE DEPUTY PLANNING MINISTER, ON THE DEPT'S INSTRUCTION, THAT AS PART OF OUR WISH TO IMPROVE RELATIONS, WE HAD UNTIL NEXT SPRING TO REIMBURSE THE DRA FOR NEWLY CONSTRUCTED SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND HEALTH CLINICS. FOLLOWING THAT MEETING, WE MADE SURE THAT THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS KNEW OF OUR ACTION.

5. SUBSEQUENT, HOWEVER, TO THAT PLANNING MINISTRY MEETING, THERE HAS BEEN ALMOST NO MOVEMENT ON THE DRA'S PART TO DO ANYTHING CONCRETE FOR US. YESTERDAY, OCT 14, WHEN I TOOK CHARGE-DESIGNATE BLOOD TO CALL ON DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER SHAH MOHAMMAD DOST, I ASKED DOST IF HE HAD ANY NEWS FOR US ON OUR "VISA" (MISSION STAFF REDUCTION) PROBLEM. DOST RESPONDED, "NOT YET," IN OTHER WORDS, ON THE SINGLE MOST PRESSING BILATERAL ISSUE IMPORTANT TO US, THE DRA HAS DONE ALMOST NOTHING. I SAY "ALMOST" BECAUSE THE DRA HAS STARTED ISSUING OUR NEW PEOPLE DRIVERS' LICENSES, EVEN IF THEY ARE NOT GIVING THEM OFFICIAL IDENTITY CARDS OR MULTIPLE ENTRY/EXIT VISAS.

6. ANOTHER ASPECT THAT TROUBLES ME IS THAT IF WE NOW GO TO SEE AMIN, WE RISK EITHER GIVING AN ERRONEOUS SIGNAL THAT THEY HAVE US OVER THE BALL AND, NOTWITHSTANDING ASST. SEC. SAUNDERS' STATEMENT, WE ARE PREPARED TO BE FORTHCOMING ON ISSUES OF INTEREST TO THEM OR RELATED TO THIS WE WILL BE RAISING EXPECTATIONS WE CANNOT LATER MEET. THE DEPARTMENT'S INSTRUCTIONS HAS SUGGESTED WE TELL AMIN: "WE WOULD APPRECIATE ANY THOUGHTS AMIN MIGHT  
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HAVE ON SPECIFIC AREAS WHICH HE BELIEVES OFFER PROSPECTS FOR IMPROVING OUR RELATIONSHIP."

7. I FEAR THAT AMIN'S RESPONSE TO THIS GESTURE IS LIKELY TO BE ONE OF POSING TO US TWO DIFFICULT REQUESTS: A RESUMPTION OF U.S. ECONOMIC AID; AND AN END TO CRITICAL VOA PERSIAN-LANGUAGE BROADCASTS. I CANNOT IMAGINE THAT THE DEPARTMENT IS IN A POSITION TO RESPOND FAVORABLY ON EITHER POINT. OTHER DEMANDS THAT HE, OR THE MFA, MIGHT ALSO LIKE TO PUT TO US, BUT WOULD PROBABLY BE TOO EMBARRASSED TO EXPRESS, WOULD BE FOR US

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TO CONTINUE TO REDUCE THE SIZE OF OUR U.S. MISSION, AND TO END ALLEGED USG ASSISTANCE TO THE INSURGENTS. TO RECAPITULATE, BY OUR TAKING THIS UNUSUAL STEP OF ASKING TO SEE AMIN, WE MAY BE RAISING EXPECTATIONS AND PROMPTING DEMANDS WE CANNOT FULFILL. THIS COULD COMPLICATE RATHER THAN EASE OUR SITUATION HERE.

8. ON THE MATTER OF TIMING, THERE IS ANOTHER CONSIDERATION TO BEAR IN MIND, TOO, RELATED TO HUMAN RIGHTS. WE HAVE JUST LEARNED THAT THE DRA HAS EXECUTED A NUMBER OF PROMINENT AND WIDELY RESPECTED ANTI-COMMUNIST POLITICAL PRISONERS, INCLUDING EX-PREMIER ETAKADI, EX-MINISTER AND KABUL MAYOR DR. WARDAK, FORMER JAMURAT HOSPITAL PRESIDENT DR. ALI AKHBAR, AND EX-ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF GENERAL SHAMPUR. I THINK IT WOULD BE UNSEENLY, SO SOON AFTER THIS DEPLORABLE SERIES OF EXECUTIONS, FOR A USG REPRESENTATIVE TO APPROACH AMIN TO EXPLORE STEPS FOR IMPROVING RELATIONS. 11

9. WHILE MY JUDGMENT (SHARED BY ARCHER BLOOD) IS THEREFORE THAT THIS IS NOT THE TIME FOR US TO SEE AMIN TO EXPLORE STEPS FOR IMPROVING RELATIONS, PERHAPS SUCH AN EXPLORATORY SESSION WITH AMIN COULD BE HELD AT A LATER TIME RATHER THAN TOMORROW (ON THE EVE OF MY DEPARTURE ON LEAVE).

10. ACTION REQUESTED: I WOULD APPRECIATE THE DEPT'S URGENT CONSIDERATION OF MY RECOMMENDATION. EVEN IF I AM NOT HERE BY THE TIME THE DEPT'S REPLY REACHES US, I AM SURE CHARGE

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BLOOD CAN SEE AMIN IF SO INSTRUCTED. THE AFGHAN PRESIDENT MADE CLEAR TO ME THAT HE IS OPEN TO SEE ANY DESIGNATED USG MISSION CHIEF. AMSTUTZ

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